

Date: 23 April 2021

Dear GCSE and Vocational Students,

We recognise the impact that COVID has had on your learning this year, and you may feel that you have not made the same progress as you would have done in any other year. Try to remember that this is same for students everywhere and it is our intention to support you to achieve your full potential.

We have been assessing your progress throughout your studies, and this year all those achievements will count towards your final grade just as in any other year. However, where you have missed opportunities to take exams or develop practical skills we will ensure you are not disadvantaged by this.

If you are studying on a vocational classroom-based course such as a BTEC, or the Princes Trust units your teachers will be reviewing your achievement to recommend a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG), based on the work you have completed and the units you have already achieved. For those of you who were on a BTEC course that had an examination as well as assignment assessments, this grade is called a Qualification level Teacher Assessed Grade (Q-TAG). It will be judged on work you have actually completed and achieved and not penalise you if you were unable to take the exam due to the pandemic.

For GCSE courses only, your teachers will be reviewing your achievement to recommend a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG), based on the work you have completed and your March progress reviews, and the final May awarding body assessments.

You will get feedback on your exams and other assessments and the marks that you have achieved, but we will not be able to tell you your final grade as this is confidential until it is agreed and amended by the awarding body. For TAG and Q-TAG assessed qualifications, grades will be released on the 12th of August for Level 2 and GCSE. For other qualifications the results will depend on when you complete your assessments.

All teacher assessed grades go through a process of moderation. This means that no one teacher decides on your scores or grade and that teachers and managers work together to mark work, measure progress and decide on grades for the whole year group. This year, the awarding bodies will also sample student work to look for mistakes, unfairness or bias and they will make the final decision on grading for all students. This means your final grade will have been looked at by a range of experts to ensure you get the recognition your work deserves.

We hope this gives you assurance that your grade will be a fair reflection of your skills and that you still have time to make progress and achieve. Please continue to work with your teachers towards this and let them know what support you need to be successful.

Wishing you every success

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Janet Smith'.

Janet Smith – Principal Havering GFE and 6th Form campuses (with responsibility for 14-16 and GCSE studies at Attlee)

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